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POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF GANDHI FAMILY FIGHT DISCUSSED

New Delhi INDIA TODAY in English 30 Apr 82 pp 22-31

[Text] *Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, where have you been?
I've been to Number One to look at the Queen!
Pussy-cat, pussy-cat, what did you there?
I frightened the dowager Queen out of her chair!*

—A CONTEMPORARY RHYME

THE SCENARIO was swift and sinister, its implications severe and satirical, and the cast, give or take a few intruding male dwarfs, strictly all-female. Durga and Kali were riding demons in New Delhi last fortnight and, adopting various garbs, both were fighting for their versions of truth and justice. The difference in the two deities is obvious—but the good Hindu would argue that they are both manifestations of the same principle of power. While Indian culture was getting its initial airing 10,000 miles away in London, the average Indian had good evidence that his own culture—political and social—was alive and kicking at home.

The goings-on of last fortnight in the capital, concerning Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and her daughter-in-law Maneka, at their simplest and therefore most identifiable level are the commonest feature of every Indian household: what could,

after all, be more intrinsically an Indian situation than that of an imperious matriarch pitted against a wilfully juvenile daughter-in-law?

Political Implications: In this case, however, the matriarch straddles not just an ordinary household but more or less the entire country. And the rebellious young shrew, for all the innocence of her freckled face, is the widow of Sanjay Gandhi—a man once responsible for derailing Indian democracy—the bride, in fact, of a figure heralded as India's future prime minister.

Such being the allocation of lead roles, the episode was worth considerably more weightage than an item of mendacious gossip; and its political implications more widely felt than are being properly acknowledged. Certainly they were not lost on the public, ferreting desperately for the latest

information, with government-owned radio and television having blacked out the show. And as one of the two chief antagonists herself put it two days after her dramatic departure from 1, Safdarjung Road: "I think I'm the best value for money for the newspaper-reading public!"

Maneka's remark implies not just an awareness of the high drama of her dismissal but also its essential element of parody. Because when august and controlled political leaders, defenders of political faith and upholders of public morality, hitch up their saris to scream at each other like haridans in a bazaar brawl, when they begin to publish, or otherwise plant abusive letters and statements in the national press, when they begin to compare the "different" backgrounds they come from or the "physical and mental abuse" they are capable of inflicting upon each

other, then the values of Indian culture they supremely enshrine are getting a bit jaded. And for a wide-eyed but appalled public they come to represent the dirt it never hoped to see or, worse, even expected to exist.

Succession Struggle: For all the built-in gall and gimmickry of the Mrs Gandhi-Maneka mudslinging contest, it is made up of equal parts of hilarity and horror, a taste

of farce becoming vicious and venal. All the more serious an issue given its context—India, now more than before, being considered the “democratic monarchy” of the Gandhi family. It is as if, pointed out Vinod Mehta in the *Sunday Observer*, “at stake was the ancestral property—India—with the heir in dispute.”

For the crux of the matter was political succession—Mrs Gandhi style. Given the dynastic precedent established by her since 1975—the official anointing, of first one son as successor, then choosing his reluctant brother after his sudden demise—Maneka’s breaking away from the family fold was not simply the eruption of a family feud. It was, and remains, a definite, calculated assertion of political independence. Her final parting is an act of defiance by an aggrieved member of the ruling family which, throwing democratic tradition to the winds has come to accept the country as its personal property: and Maneka by getting out—“my mother-in-law gave me the marching orders”—is only claiming her share.

In other words, being the good businesswoman she is, she’s asking for a majority holding in a company that is liable to be called Gandhi Inc. In terms of social nicety this would mean that, next time political observers ask the question: “After Indira, who?” Mrs Gandhi cannot, however gingerly, prop up Rajiv. Because there is a woman waiting who believes she’s ahead in the queue.

Unconvincing Denials: Not all of Maneka’s repeated protestations—carefully qualified by the phrase “as of now”—that she is not a political person, has no plan of entering politics and will not head a political party can obliterate her act of attending the Lucknow convention, a blatantly political act. Her subsequent denials can only certify her own decision to plan her political future, having been unable to do so with her mother-in-law’s official sanction.

In fact, for a 25-year-old, who has spent the last seven years of her life living a dyed-in-the-wool political life, who has been continually tuned to a wholly political life-style, the break from the source of power cannot but be without political motivation. “I’ve learnt to survive, that’s all,” says Maneka flatly, each time she is pressed for a summation of her years in 1, Safdarjung Road. Asked specifically what she learnt from her late husband, the young widow who has not for a minute lost her composure, her cool wit or her chill repartees, answers without a

moment’s thought: “From Sanjay I learnt a lot. Most of all he taught me how to think. To think for myself, but to think four moves ahead.”

Sitting easily on a bed in her rented room in a New Delhi motel, or behind the vast expanse of a desk in her fourth-floor office from where she runs a trucking business, this is obviously no long-suffering widow-with-child cringing under the whiplash strokes of a tyrannical mother-in-law. The innocent face is hardening; the shoulder-length hair falls straight, and the accent of her speaking voice is clipped and conventish, suprising for a girl who only attended coeducational public school establishments. Dressed in cheerful *kurta-pyjamas* she looks neither trapped nor oppressed but on top of the situation.

Lessons Learnt: This girl has learnt from the illustrious Gandhis that “suffering” is a lovely word: they have “suffered” hardest for country and kin, and they have “sacrificed” harder. This girl has learnt from her husband’s family how to quote the Bhagavad Gita or some other religious scripture at appropriate moments. She has learnt from her famous mother-in-law how to answer in monosyllables, how to handle public meetings, and how to handle a tough press. She knows how to call a press conference, whom to pick for interviews, how to release hand-outs, and exactly how to deal out the answers, the compliments and the insults.

Most of all she has learnt how to steadfastly deny that she has any political plans exactly when she is in the thick of them. Like her late husband, and her brother-in-law, who both made their debuts at the precise moment, she will go on denying that she is a political person probably till minutes before—if she so chooses—she is required to file her nomination for an election.

Maneka Gandhi the survivor is, in her own phrase, “trying to get her act together” and ostensibly that includes finding herself a house to live in—“only the second-most brave person in this city will rent me a house. The first-most brave person is me for leaving the one I lived in”—so that she can fend for herself and her two-year-old son.

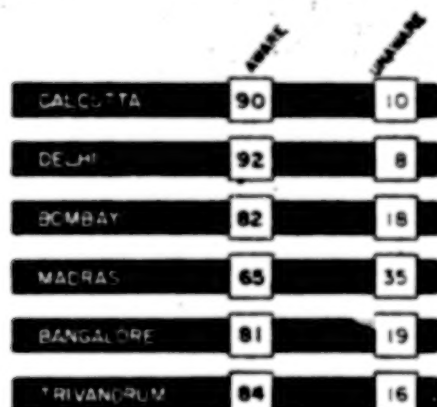
Declared Assets: This she will do on the small income she claims her husband left her: as managing director of Rajdhani Traders, she leased out trucks to distribute soft drinks for Congress(I) tycoon Charanjit Singh; she is therefore entitled to a company house and a salary-in-hand of about Rs

2,700 per month. True, she owns a small house on a large plot in a prime South Delhi suburb, but it's too small for her family and Akbar Ahmed has occupied it since Sanjay's time, and it's awkward to expect him to quit now.

These are her declared assets. Yet no one need shed tears or collect pennies for a

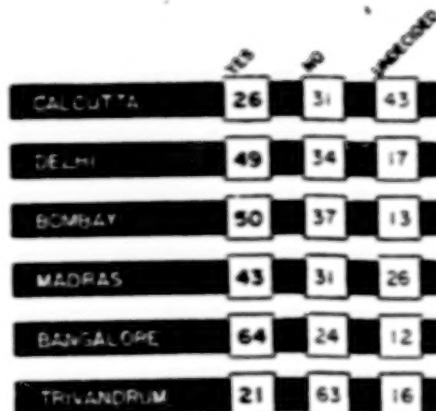
AS THE news of Maneka Gandhi quitting 1, Safdarjung Road spread like wildfire in the press (AIR and Doordarshan maintained total silence—thanks presumably to 'freedom of the Government media') INDIA TODAY commissioned Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) to conduct a poll in six cities to find out how people have reacted to the internecine quarrel that has shaken the prime minister's household. On April 2, a total of 2,292 interviews were conducted in Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Madras, Bangalore and Trivandrum. The results of the poll:

► Awareness of the 'Problem'



In all cities except Madras, over 80 per cent had heard of the problems that Maneka and her sons have been having. In Madras also, while over 80 per cent of the men were aware of the problems, only 45 per cent of the women had heard of the fracas. Those who had heard of the problems were further questioned on some specific aspects.

► Should Maneka have attended the Lucknow convention?



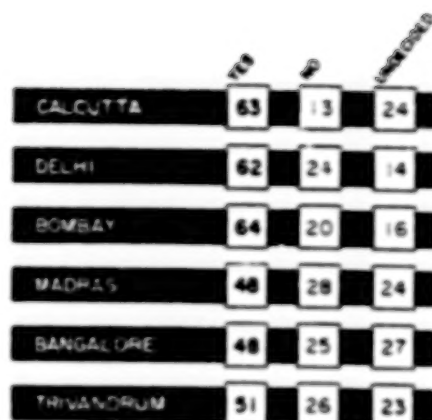
Both the Congress(I) and Mrs Gandhi had disapproved of the convention—yet Maneka attended it. On balance, electors in Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Bangalore felt that Maneka was right to attend the convention. Disapproval of her actions was surprisingly voiced in the Marxist strongholds of Calcutta and Trivandrum.

► In the circumstances should Maneka have been asked to leave 1, Safdarjung Road?



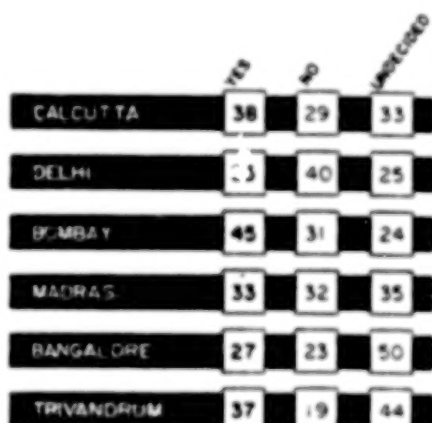
In every city except Trivandrum, more electors opposed Mrs Gandhi's action (in giving Maneka the marching orders if she did not change her ways) than supported her. The level of disapproval of Mrs Gandhi's action was greater among women (particularly in Delhi, Bombay and Madras) than among men.

► Did the Lucknow convention have any political significance?



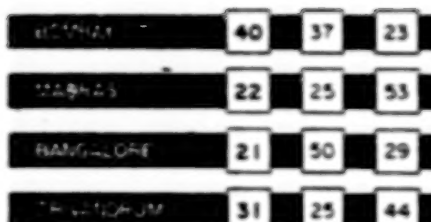
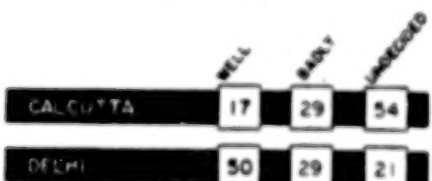
In all cities, there was a clear feeling that Maneka's action in attending the Lucknow convention had political significance. This view was held more strongly in Bombay, Calcutta and Delhi than elsewhere.

► *Is this the beginning of the Rajiv vs Maneka battle?*



Opinions varied across cities. Electors in Bombay, Calcutta and Trivandrum felt, on balance, that behind the current issue lay the Maneka vs Rajiv tussle. Electors in Delhi (who are closer to the scene of action) held the opposite view. In Madras and Bangalore, views were fairly evenly divided.

► *How is Rajiv doing as a politician?*



All respondents were asked whether they felt Rajiv was doing well or badly as a politician.

It is perhaps a sign of Rajiv's low profile that over 40 per cent of the electors in Calcutta, Madras and Trivandrum were unable to venture an opinion. The 'no view' proportion was, in general, higher among women (and particularly so in Calcutta and Madras).

In Calcutta and Bangalore the balance of opinion suggests that Rajiv is not doing well. In Delhi and Trivandrum, on the other hand, the balance is in his favour. In Bombay and Madras, opinion is fairly evenly divided.

"Save Maneka" fund; nor is she likely to go around with a begging bowl, say erstwhile friends who swear of a fortune she was bequeathed by her husband; an expensive plane sold recently, real estate and a handsome trucking business. Certainly her mother, the artful Amteshwar can bail out her daughter now from her profits of once having been the "nation's mother-in-law". From being the wife of a humble army colonel living in rented accommodation, the once-feared Amteshwar, having acquired Safdarjung Road connections is said to have acquired much else: prime properties including a charming bungalow in an expensive New Delhi area.

Not content with being a magazine publisher, Amteshwar went into a partnership with a friend named Indira Dhody in a garment export business that, deviously, pressed textile inspectors into issuing certificates for export consignments; the case came up before the Shah Commission during the Janata regime and misuse of Mrs Gandhi's name had the present prime minister hauled up.

With such antecedents and on such rudimentary resources the young widowed Maneka, fairly homeless, is expected to eke out her future—if there are any believers who will buy her hard luck story. And there undoubtedly are. In the six-city snap poll conducted by INDIA TODAY last week, a majority sympathised with her.

YET believing anything in the capital the last fortnight had become a bizarre business: who would have believed, for instance the virulent exchanges that took place between Mrs Gandhi, Maneka and Maneka's sister Ambika the day she was "thrown out" of Safdarjung Road? Who would have believed the intemperate accusations and counter-accusations unless they appeared in print? Most of all who would believe that the prime minister's staff, in stories circulated by UNI, could put out defences of such infantile intelligence that they only implicated the prime minister further?

Accusing Akbar Ahmed, sponsor of the Lucknow convention, of trying to sabotage the Uttar Pradesh Rajya Sabha election being held at the same time, one such UNI report on April 4, accused him "and his friends... (of) indulging in a witch-hunt of these aides of Mrs Gandhi and alleging that they are misleading the prime minister".

"Witch-hunt?" says Maneka, her eyebrows clicking up much like her mother-in-law's used to during the Janata regime at the sound of the same word. "tell me, just tell me, how can a 25-year-old, sitting in a hotel room, carry out a witch-hunt against the prime minister and her government?" Since she refuses all personal press interviews, "India's other Mrs Gandhi" as *Newsweek* called her, only meets the press if they come armed with accusations from the opposing camp which she claims she will reliably refute.

Accusation: As for her mother-in-law accusing her of using "bad language" or behaving in "an indifferent and rude manner" Maneka trots out witty but harmless stories of her "irreverence"—stories of such innocent, schoolgirlish fun, it is hard to imagine it is the same mind penning the furious, bitter, nasty little epistles that have checked the prime minister on the front page of newspapers.

Other accusations, of her links with Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh (RSS), the Lok Dal, with opposition leaders like H.N. Bahuguna and George Fernandes, are answered with the same tone of mockery Mrs Gandhi applies when facing similar charges. Of her friendship with Vasundhara Raje, daughter of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Rajmata Vijaya Raje Scindia of Gwalior, who was instrumental in the Surya sale to BJP members, Maneka is apt to turn the tables with measured candour: "Oh come on!" she says kiddingly, "yes

Vasundhara is a close personal friend. But if you really want to know she was in and out of the house long before I met her. She was in fact a friend of Rajiv and Sonia's and a family friend."

Maneka's protagonists—and they are a growing number even among the unsung public who are eager to show sympathy for the underdog daughter-in-law ignominiously

"thrown out" of her family home—are full of horror stories about the indignities heaped upon her at Safdarjung Road following Sanjay's death. "Even war widows are privileged people in this country," snaps a friend, recounting instances of how she was consistently cut to size and finally "hounded out".

Thwarted: Maneka herself has given the press two instances of how her mother-in-law, she says, prevented her from taking up an occupation after her husband's death. In the first, although she was elected president of an animal hospital in old Delhi, she was asked not to accept the job. Instead, she was given money from the Sanjay Memorial Fund to start a new animal hospital on her own. In the second, when she proposed to newspaper owner K.K. Birla that she start a new magazine for him, he agreed on the condition that her mother-in-law gave the permission. Mrs Gandhi refused.

It is also a fact that soon after Sanjay's death Mrs Gandhi had offered Maneka the job of becoming her personal secretary. When Maneka accepted, the offer was withdrawn on the grounds that Sonia, her Italian sister-in-law who over the years has established a particularly close rapport with the prime minister and frequently travels abroad with her on official trips, objected to Maneka taking over. She was not encouraged at public occasions; instead her movements were curtailed, her mail censored, her telephones tapped. Listening to Maneka's protagonists is a convincing experience.

Only partial truths can be uncovered from her own story which, like all political tales of woe, has its moments of expediency, its artful scheming and synthetic naivete. The rest must be inferred or put together from her own past. With widespread emotion ranged for and against her, Maneka is already an increasingly political issue.

Transformation:

It is not precisely the most convenient moment to recall the fun-loving but always ambitious teenager who was modelling towels for a major Delhi Cloth Mills campaign in 1974. Or the transformation that took place once she married Sanjay. "She was always a highly intelligent, slightly arrogant creature," says a friend from her last days at school in Sanawar, "there seemed even then, no question in her mind that, like the Gandhis, she was born to rule. Once she married one it became a certainty." Almost immediately after her entry into Safdarjung Road—Sanjay and she were married in September 1974, having met less than a year earlier at a wedding—she began to acquire new friends. She hardly saw many of her cousins and family members who were too awed by her new-found status; her immediate family of mother, younger sister Ambika and brother Viren she drew closer to herself.

Born in 1956, the eldest of three children of Lt-Col T.S. Anand, a gentle, uninspiring army officer, Maneka's closest ally since childhood was her headstrong, often ruthlessly ambitious mother. Amteshwar came from a distinguished background but carried a chip on her shoulder: as the youngest child of Sir Datar Singh, a renowned agriculturist, later adviser to the Home Ministry, she had always felt that she had married beneath her station.

Endowed neither with the good looks of her older sister nor with the wealth her brothers were liable to inherit as sons, Amteshwar never took her mild-mannered husband seriously; nor did her children. She quit her husband to go and teach in a boarding school in Gwalior. Bent upon making her mark in life, she often tried to chalk out an independent course till Sanjay's discovery of Maneka.

Rapidly Amteshwar patched up her rocky marriage and settled to accumulate assets. In pursuit of their common penchant for power, the mother-daughter team started *Surya* in late 1976, as their foray into conquering a share of the profitable media market. Naturally, there was no scarcity of eager advertisers in the beginning.

Tough Style: Maneka was with Sanjay throughout the fatal election of 1977. She was witness to her husband's meteoric rise at the country's controls, and she now saw his ambition defeated. "Sanjay only began to care for me after he lost the election," she is said to have remarked to a friend later of her early years of marriage. It was with the onset of the Janata Government that Maneka triumphed in her own style, showing her mettle.

Overnight she converted *Surya* into a broadsheet of the most outrageously scurrilous variety, with salacious exposures of Janata politicians jostling with loud public relations for the Gandhis. As a scandal-buster of spurious effect, *Surya* despite its dwindling income, became synonymous with Maneka's private brand of muck-raking. It exposed her aggressive, hard-bitten capacity

for survival in tough times—another characteristic picked up from her husband and mother-in-law's political resilience.

"Sanjay taught me never to lose my sense of humour at the most difficult times," Maneka admits freely today. "At the worst of times, the day Mrs Gandhi was arrested or the day they took him in, we would always laugh and joke about it." Some of that training paid off by January 1980, when the Gandhis were back in the saddle, and it is paying off today when she is branching out on her own.

Parody: As of now, to use her favourite qualifying phrase, she sees her role as more than that of continuing nuisance value to Mrs Gandhi and her government. As Arun Shourie has pointed out in the *Indian Express*: "For the moment Maneka has to do little. If the recent past is any guide, Mrs Gandhi will transform the little into a lot. When some unfortunate girl is next burnt for dowry, Maneka will just have to visit the bereaved parents, she'll just have to walk

over to the next Harnan carnage to dramatise the state of law and order in Mrs Gandhi's India and to needle Mrs Gandhi into something rash. She'll just have to visit the site of the next train accident to puncture the claims of efficiency. Maneka can singlehanded and alone reduce many of Mrs Gandhi's standard ploys into a parody.

That she sees the parody of the situation and uses the word

frequently herself is indication enough of what her immediate role will be. Asked where she thinks she will go from here, Maneka smiles, half in derision and half self-deprecation. "Where do you think I can go?" Akhtar Ahmed, her present backer who has led the revolt with her, insists that Maneka and he require no ammunition for their immediate political progress. Speaking to journalists minutes before she came out to address the convention in Lucknow, Ahmed said, "Sanjay started out with 11 MLAs, he had nobody with him. I don't even require those."

Says a fence-sitting Congress(I) MP, a former member of Sanjay's brigade, who has just seen light, "Who knows? Maybe she'll find a Dumpy in every state." Like several other members of the Sanjay gang, he is silently eating his heart out, having made public his censure of Maneka's move through one of the customary statements that are flooding newspaper offices these days. Silence, after the initial condemnation, in fact, has come to invade the rank of Congress(I) politicians.

Future Moves: Having made the first move—the first, that is, of the four that Sanjay taught her to plan as advance strategy—Maneka will only point to the rising pile of daily mail that accrues on her desk. It cannot be said, whatever her political future may amount to, that her first move was ill-timed or faulty. Months after her husband's death when one of Khushwant Singh's possibly harmless but picturesque expressions comparing her to Durga astride a tiger swelled into a "draft-Maneka" drama there was no follow-up by her

amidst the din.

Indeed, at that stage it seemed there would be no action forthcoming on the Maneka front. The poor wailing widow would be consigned to some backroom of the Safdarjung Road barrack, to-ing and fro-ing from her harmless little bookshop and her animal hospital. She was not even a trustee of the powerful Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Trust, handed over to a "reliable" family member, Arun Nehru. In fact, her fate was sealed temporarily when it turned out that she was underage by a few months—to stand for the Amethi seat left vacant by her husband. And the allied rumour that Mrs Gandhi would afford Maneka some other political sinocure, like the presidency of the Youth Congress(I), has only recently been proved true in one of the absurd statements apparently emanating from the prime minister's house, though it attributes it to Maneka and her mother.

For one who shared the Sanjay mantle of glory trimmed with ignominy, who participated actively in all politics of the Sanjay era, who partook of the family political decisions, who actually made the crucial telephone call to Arun Nehru asking him if he would like to be an MP who personally canvassed with the prime minister for election tickets for people like Kalpnath Rai, the worst humiliation of life after Sanjay was political oblivion.

NOT for a single minute since he crashed in the Pitts aircraft that June morning of 1980 has Maneka stopped regarding Rajiv as an innocent abroad in politics—at least in comparison to her. The attitude, what she has frankly discussed often with friends in private conversations, is compounded by personal prejudice against Rajiv and his wife from the time of her marriage.

The two brothers had never been particularly close in recent years, and with Sanjay's growing involvement in politics, had drifted apart to the

point of animosity though they continued to live in the same house. The two sisters-in-law had ever less to say to each other, in fact their re-

relationship bordered on the blatantly antagonistic, both being creatures of totally differing sensibilities.

Watching Rajiv's faltering entry into politics, quite literally into the seat he husband had left empty, seeing Sanjay's political allies being slow, sidestepped and in fact a conscious de-Sanjayfication taking place in the party, Maneka felt the time had come to act. In recent months she had come to compare, more and more vociferously, the glaringly different operating styles of the brothers.

Worse still, she believed her another-day-law, without Sanjay as a constant check and confidante, was losing her grip on party and government affairs. "Sanjay's whole style was to unite and rule. His loyalists remained

loyal—Mummy wants to divide and rule, pit people against each other, rule through dummies, what else can she expect but total disarray" she told a friend late last year.

At Loggerheads: The disparity and differing quality of leadership was evident within the household. Mrs Gandhi's traditional advisers and Rajiv's new aides seemed perpetually at loggerheads. On one side were trusted ancients like R.K. Dhanwan and Dharendra Brahmachari, on the other Arun Nehru and M.L. Fozdar. Their styles were different, the confusions they bred together dis-

astrous. Each was trying to oust the other and Rajiv seemed to have no capacity to streamline them into a team as Sanjay had.

Maneka had made up her mind long ago. She was simply looking for an opportune moment. For months the whole scenario was carefully being planned with the few friends she could trust. The Surya sale was carefully designed as the first embarrassment, followed by the Lucknow convention. The prime minister walked straight into both traps. Maneka was also

expecting her dismissal. When it came, it proved—as she had imagined—an even greater embarrassment for her mother-in-law who had now assumed the proportions of a full-fledged political adversary. Had Mrs Gandhi over-reacted to the whole incident? Would the scenario have been different if the prime minister had anticipated the series of shrewd moves and swamped her by supporting the Lucknow convention?

Instead her amazing outcry to ostracise Maneka has led observers to believe that Mrs Gandhi may be losing her grip on this and other dissonant issues. Storms commentator M.V. Kamath in the *Indian Express*: "Certainly women as a whole should desert Mrs Gandhi for the shabby treatment that she has accorded her daughter-in-law. She has literally driven Maneka Gandhi out of her home to make her throne safe for her eldest son." Girilal Jain in the *Times of India* takes the opposite view: "Mrs Gandhi does not need to appease anyone, especially in her own party. It owes

its very existence to her... the Maneka episode should spur them (Mrs Gandhi and Rajiv) on to deal firmly with undesirable elements which crept into the organisation as a particularly awkward time in Mrs Gandhi's career."

Grotesque Drama: Clearly then, the Maneka factor, with its potential, subliminal implications for Mrs Gandhi, is inseparably tied to the hereditary factor. Her periodic protestations notwithstanding, it is a Gordian knot that cannot but form the centre-piece in the grotesque family drama being played out before a huge and expectant audience. At this stage of Mrs Gandhi's career, even her naivest supporters cannot deny the fact that the prime minister will not settle for anything less than dynastic rule.

She is utterly, if erroneously, convinced that only the Nehru family can rule this vast country effectively.

Nehru's legacy to her must be passed on to her progeny. At one stage, the anointed crown prince was Sanjay and all the fawning courtiers paid him the requisite homage. With his passing, the mantle has fallen on another pilot who wears it with uncomfortable grace.

If Rajiv had been anything like Sanjay, it is obvious that Maneka would have been committing political harakiri by bucking her illustrious in-laws. Her impetuous actions, therefore, acquire added significance if only because of its timing. Rajiv is currently trapped in a

dilemma. He has the power and the blessings of his mother, but lacks the grit, recklessness and dominating nature that appears essential to being accepted in a party as hair-trigger tense as the ruling party.

Wretched State: Against that background, Maneka's defiance, and the skeletons she is capable of unearthing, whether real or imagined, threaten to do irreparable harm to a party already totally dependant on the person it is aimed against—Mrs Gandhi. It is a wretched state of affairs that allows a family squabble to cast aspersions on the ability of a prime minister to govern a country. It is worse when dirty linen washed in public passes for affairs of state. Yet, it is hardly surprising, for in no uncertain terms has Mrs Gandhi determined that the future of the country is interwoven with her future and that of her progeny, and that all institutions and traditions in India must subserve that cardinal principle.

If the Maneka affair is to be restrained as a nine-day wonder, then clearly the time has come for strong departures, for bold moves that will put institutions right, set parties on wholesome political traditions and give steel to institutions ruthlessly worn to pulp. It is by no means an easy task. Nor will it be popular in a system which has been bullied, cajoled and pushed into the groove in which it now moves, falteringly and even ineffectively. It is the stuff which gives family affairs precedence over national affairs, gives substance to gossip and belittles the statute of democratic governance. —SUNIL SETHI

CSO: 4220/550

DEFENSE OFFICIAL ON NATIONAL DEFENSE

Kuala Lumpur ASIAN DEFENSE JOURNAL in English Apr 82 pp 13-17

[Interview with Abang Abu Bakar Dato' Bandar Abang Haji Mustapha, defense minister, by Zara Dian and Thana Sabaratnam; date and place not given]

[Text]

ASIAN DEFENCE JOURNAL conducted an exclusive interview with Malaysia's Defence Minister, Abang Abu Bakar Dato' Bandar Abang Haji Mustapha who provided some insight into Malaysia's defence plans and projected expansion of the armed forces.

Though not elaborate on questions of policy, the answers give an overall picture of the country's defence stance on a regional basis, targets for the military build-up with new weapons and infrastructure and measures to peg 'loopholes' in the procedure of issuing tenders.

Questions touched on the purchase of new strike aircraft, problems of avoiding 'scandals' in the purchase and maintenance of costly defence equipment and the preparedness of the armed forces.

Question A: Finding sources of supplies and equipment for the armed forces has become a touchy public issue lately. Can we ask once again whether there has been a clear cut policy by the Malaysian Government to totally ban purchase of defence products from Britain even if it is competitively priced and qualitatively designed and manufactured.

Answer: Preparing for a country's defence has never been a simple task. Acquisition of supplies and equipment involves much study and discussion and above all it demands large amounts of financial resources. It is therefore inevitable that the public should show concern for the subject.

This interest by the public is certainly a healthy sign but one

should not ignore the need to balance the extent the public should be informed and the more important need to maintain the secrecy of certain vital military aspects of defence plans and equipment purchases.

Let me assure you, however, that in acquiring any defence equipment the government makes detailed studies of its needs with the national interest paramount in mind.

Relating to your more direct question on British equipment, I am not aware that there is any policy to ban the purchase of British defence products. What the Prime Minister has directed is that any decision to buy British products should be referred to his Department and that other acceptable products from other countries

should be submitted together for its consideration. This, by no means implies that British defence products are banned. In any defence purchases, the best equipment for the job within our means will always be considered.

There are in fact quite substantial British equipment and weapons already being purchased.

B: I am aware that ASEAN in the immediate future will not develop into a regional military pact; but, is it not possible to foresee a common regional approach, however informal or remote, in terms of security arrangement and defence strategy - especially as the region is rich in natural resources and very strategically located.

Answer: There is no doubt that the ASEAN region is very important today, both due to its strategic location and its natural resources. Precisely because of the latter factor countries in the region need to live peacefully and be able to develop their economies. It is because of this objective too that Asean should continue to be a political and economic grouping and not a military one. ASEAN is certainly aware of Superpowers' interest in the region and it is precisely for this reason that Asean has collectively adopted a common diplomatic and political approach to discourage Superpowers' conflicts in the region.

ASEAN and Malaysia, in particular, firmly believe that the concept of ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) is the best means of achieving stability, and security in the region. Defence planning should best be left to the individual countries of ASEAN to draw up for themselves, though this does not preclude bilateral discussion on matters of common security interest.

For example, while Malaysian defence planning is entirely a Malaysian affair, under the framework of the General Border Agreement with

Indonesia and Thailand, Malaysia has held bilateral discussions and combined exercises with both countries. This is the kind of arrangement which we would like to continue.

Exchange of intelligence on a multi-lateral basis between ASEAN countries has long been practiced. That arrangement too will continue.

C: One of the common failures among the Third World countries in buying sophisticated equipment is maintenance and repairs to keep them serviceable. A typical example is the Iranian experience. Can the citizens in this country be reassured that we will not repeat the mistake, otherwise ending-up with white elephants and public scandals?

Answer: We are fully aware of the problems associated with the maintenance of sophisticated equipment and the experience and problems of Third World countries. Sophistication, however, does not necessarily imply difficulty in maintenance; on the contrary modern technology has in many ways simplified this.

Advancement in electronics for an example has enabled us to carry out less maintenance of electronic equipment. By simply changing a printed circuit board (module) for example, an equipment can readily become serviceable and operational again. It is admitted that equipment with modern technology will require a larger initial outlay but the simplicity in maintenance will in the long run reduce the life cycle cost of the equipment.

Moreover, sophistication is relative. We have purchased and maintained supersonic aircraft, modern missile ships and armoured personnel carriers (APC) for several years now and as we advance in our knowledge and experience, it is a natural move to buy a piece of equipment which is of higher technology and more cost effective.

Let me assure you that in the

acquisition of any new equipment, training of maintenance personnel and transfer of technology are always part of the package deal.

We are thinking further ahead. We have begun to assemble equipment in the country and are now planning to set up manufacturing facilities especially spares to ensure that to the best of our ability equipment purchased will continue to be functional and operational.

The Government is considering the setting up of a more elaborate defence industry in the country. In fact the Ministry of Defence has put up a working paper setting out the framework to put this project into effect.

The working paper has been circulated to the relevant Ministries. We have received their comments and these have now been presented to the Cabinet for final consideration and decision.

D: One important question in the public mind is the subject of cost over-run because of delay in decision-making, delay in awarding tenders, delay in implementing projects or simply but significantly because contractors deliberately under-price their quotations just to win Mindef (Ministry of Defence) tenders. Are there positive steps being taken to avoid past mistakes? Are there measures to penalise whoever is responsible for such cost over-run?

Answer: We are fully conscious of the effect of cost not only because of the interest shown by the public but also its effect on the overall programme budgeted in the Fourth-Malaysia Plan. Cost over-run however can be caused by a number of reasons - inflation and increasing research and development cost are a few of them. Delays in decision making only help to compound it.

Additionally cost over-run is caused by sheer underestimation of projects at project conceptualisa-

tion stage. I have to admit that certain equipment are new to us resulting in initial costing being grossly underestimated.

Costly re-adjustments have to be made by the time the project is launched. Quicker or faster delivery time of equipment or completion of a building will invariably also push up the price.

Where cost over-run is due to individual's action, and if they are found to be involved and proof is available, the Ministry will take necessary disciplinary action. But for positive remedial action individuals who man the various sub-systems have to be trained, developed, rewarded, or punished. This you will realise will take some time.

This system has also made it possible for deliberate under pricing by contractors to be detected faster. We are aware that many projects are new to us and to those who manage and award tenders. Thus, we cannot guarantee the system is fool-proof. We are confident however that those concerned in the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Finance are continuously introducing and testing new ideas to improve the tendering and procurement systems.

E: Could we have some of the highlights of the current planned expansion and the significance placed in building up the armed forces in relation to the regional and national defence goals?

Answer: Briefly, the purchase of new equipment or weapons systems of greater sophistication than those we have now in our inventory are the highlights of the expansion. Purchase of armoured vehicles, new ships such as Corvettes, Mine-hunters and combat fighter aircraft are key projects in our planned expansion.

Our expansion is considered to be a balanced one and each service has been authorised to develop to meet its specific goals, in harmony

with the armed forces' total plan. In this respect, the increase in size and its associated technical and domestic accommodation or camps required are major programmes for us and are accorded special attention in their implementation.

Facilities development and expansion are given top priority in support of the weapon acquisition. No less important is the attention given to training of skilled and professional personnel and the upgrading or expansion of our training facilities.

The government has allocated 7.2 billion Ringgit (US\$1 = 2.28 Malaysian Ringgit) for this expansion programme. I consider this a major increase from the previous Plan. Taking into consideration the new and modern equipment and their logistical and maintenance support requirements and prices under high rate of inflation, this sum is not large in relation to requirements. Taking note of this constraint, we are taking steps to optimise the use of this allocation and to ensure that the optimum number of projects can be completed.

'SHORT OF ENGINEERS'

Expansion of the armed forces has been satisfactory. However, to be frank, I am not very happy at the rate accommodation facilities are being put up. This is not our fault; it is not because we have no money. It is because we are short of engineers. We are short of this highly skilled manpower.

And because of this shortage, our programme is slightly delayed as far as accommodation and barracks are concerned.

Overall we are about halfway in what we have to spend. But for last year we are quite satisfied with our implementation programme, because most of the development projects were carried out on schedule.

Now we have various task forces to assist in implementing these projects. Besides those in the Ministry of Defence, we also have a special committee with high-powered members from the Treasury, the Economic Planning Unit, the Implementation Coordination Unit, the Public Services Department as well as those respective military and civilian heads of MINDEF. I chair this committee. Decisions can be made on the spot so that there is no hold up in the implementation of our projects.

For the end of this period of expansion - we are thinking in terms of 1985 - we should be all right. We would have all the planned complements.

F: What factors have motivated the Forces enlargement, as stated in the press by the Defence Ministry officials? Would Malaysia adopt a new defence policy to put the nation's Army, Air Force and Navy on a more vigorous footing in line with meeting any untoward external threat?

Answer: Several factors have motivated the defence forces expansion, not least is the recent political and military developments in Indo-China. The region is fast becoming involved in the Sino-Soviet rivalry and the possibility, however remote that it might spill over beyond the confines of its present limit is always there. It is always good policy to buy some form of defence insurance.

You might like to note that in the past, Malaysia relied heavily on foreign assistance for her defence. Since the British withdrawal in the early 1970's, Malaysia has adopted a policy of self-reliance in defence. It is appropriate that Malaysia takes the necessary steps to enlarge and strengthen her defence forces in line with the current situation.

The change in emphasis from counter insurgency to conventional

warfare within our environment is not really geared to any hypothetical offensive from the north. The armed forces need both capabilities; we have not been giving priority to the conventional aspect in the past and are now trying to make up for it.

G: Three clashes between the Malaysian army and the guerilla forces of the Communist Party of Malaya were reported along the Thai-Malaysia border late last year, according to the 'Far Eastern Economic Review'. The Perak State Security Committee feels that the Communist terrorists (CTs) have intensified activities in the southern Thailand salient. How serious is the danger of these skirmishes to the security of the country as the Communists appear to be regaining strength along the border?

Answer: The Communist terrorists in the border areas are believed to be still attempting to return to their respective operational areas to reconsolidate their organisation after being chased out of the area by Malaysia - Thai security forces. Their activities so far can generally be considered as mainly confined to the collection of supplies, subscription and recruitment.

The recent spate of attacks on our border security posts in Kroh is believed to be part of the CTs attempts to boost their low morale particularly within their ranks. We do not consider these skirmishes to be an indication that the CTs are gaining in strength; on the contrary intelligence reports indicate that the strength of the various CTs' units is depleting due to desertions and surrenders especially following the Government's disclosure of the surrender of former Malayan Communist Party Chairman, Musa Ahmad.

However, today with modern mass communications including TV and small clash between the armed

forces and the CTs could be made to appear serious to the public, though they may in fact not be the case.

The CTs will continue their tactics of harrassing security forces from time to time as a means to boost up their morale and also to show to the general population that they still exist. The situation is however well under control.

H: The government had early this year made known plans to build up the armed forces near the Thai border areas, with the addition of another army division. How far have plans gone ahead to bolster the ground forces in the areas?

Answer: The plan is progressing well, but I am afraid I cannot tell you more.

I: Touching on proposed plans by the Malaysian government to purchase strike aircraft, the tactical jet fighter, Vought A-7 Corsair is one type being considered, following the lifting of the ban on its sale to Malaysia by the Reagan Administration.

A team lead by the Royal Malaysian Air Force Chief, went on a fact-finding mission to the United States to evaluate the aircraft. Have recommendations been made by the team to the government on the A-7 Corsair?

Answer: The team which made the visit to USA was headed by Chief of the Royal Malaysian Air Force Lt Gen. (Air) Dato Mohd. Taib and for your information they evaluated the A-7 Corsair and several other aircrafts as well.

The evaluation report has since been submitted to the Ministry and is being studied in conjunction with A4 Skyhawk before a decision is made. You will realise other considerations such as infrastructural requirements, maintenance, the kind of functions which the aircraft is to be employed will also have to be taken into account.

We have already bought outright the cocoons for the original Skyhawks - which have been paid for.

The decision awaited for now is whether we are going to buy the Vought A-7 or refurbish our Skyhawks.

In the choice of fighter aircraft we have to tailor our requirements and our needs to what we can afford. I think it would be a sin to buy planes which we cannot afford. What's the use of buying 100 F-18 or A-7s or other futuristic planes, if we have to 'gada' (pawn) our country; I am not for it.

If there is going to be a Third World War, it is going to be a push-button type of warfare, so whatever budget we allocate may not be adequate.

What we are aiming for is to be able to stand on our own feet to the kind of threat which might occur to our country.

J: Malaysian Government plans to purchase medium weight battle tanks have been held up by West German authorities, due to the stringent arms export policy in that country. How far has a decision been delayed and what other sources has the government considered for the purchase of tanks?

Answer: The Malaysian Government has examined several tanks produced by a number of countries and it is true that it is now seriously considering the purchase of West German tanks. However, if the purchase of the German tanks does not materialise, the Government will have to look at alternative sources.

K: New arrangements have been introduced into the tendering system for arms purchase to cut out alleged 'foul play' in the transactions for these items, according to the Secretary-General of the Defence Ministry, Tan Sri Mohamed Yusof bin Abdul Rahman.

How effective would this be to

check 'foul play' and what are the levels of decision-making in the process of placing orders?

Answer: The procedure for processing tenders, which the Government is currently adopting, is based on an element of objectivity incorporating a check-and-balance system to ensure unbiased decisions. This is secured through the involvement of a number of Government agencies in the examination of the various issues at the different stages before making a final decision. There is no where along the line that an individual is permitted to exert any influence on the evaluation process whether it refers to technical, financial, or other contractual considerations. To come up with the most cost effective purchases, the Government continuously emphasizes the importance of assessing every tender on an equal-footing basis to ensure fairness to all parties concerned.

For example, the technical assessment is carried out by professional military officers either from the Army, Navy or Air Force as the case may be depending on the nature of equipment or project under consideration. The technical assessment report is then reviewed by a separate committee consisting of expertise from the Ministry of Defence and/or the Ministry of Finance. It is not uncommon that these two organisations are assisted by expertise from other government professional organisations such as SIRIM and the Chemistry Department. This Committee will then forward its views to the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Finance and in some cases to the Prime Minister's Department where the matter will be further considered by various tender boards whose members are drawn from appropriate disciplines. Membership of these tender boards is not neces-

sarily confined to the Client Ministry but in many cases is also drawn from an independent organisation which has nothing to do with the project at all. Even the tender board recommendations have to be referred to a higher forum comprising different sets of officers and individuals for a final decision. Where the purchase is very large or sensitive, the matter is even referred to the Cabinet for a final decision.

From the above, it is clear that the procurement process involves at least four independent but complementary levels ensuring that the final decision is reflective of an aggregate opinion and not that of an individual.[]

CSO: 4220/540

ARMED FORCES DESCRIBED

Kuala Lumpur ASIAN DEFENSE JOURNAL in English Apr 82 pp 18-21

[Text] **M**alaysia's armed forces are in the midst of an unprecedented phase of expansion in manpower and renewal of military weapons of the latest sophisticated types. The army, navy and air force are being enlarged and the country is acquiring weapons systems which could be a match for adversaries in the event of hostilities in future.

The programme to upgrade the defence forces in terms of manpower training and weaponry involves a massive sum of about 7.2 billion ringgit (US\$1 = 2.28 ringgit) allocated by the government and covers the period up to 1985.

It is high time for Malaysia to revamp its defence potentials, to strengthen the core of its combat capabilities to be among the militarily progressive countries in this age of electronic warfare, where personnel alone cannot fight a war, but their technical skills must be geared to latest weapons.

However, for Malaysia the overall defence objective is to be able to strike back at any external intrusion or attack, and maintain a competent defence force in a state of preparedness.

Besides, the country is also keen to equip its arsenal with advanced weapons, to do away with outdated methods and equipment and bolster its strike power from the ground, the sea and air.

Compared to other countries in Asean, Malaysia has some catching up to do where the purchase of strike aircraft, missiles or ground weapons are concerned. Even Singapore which is the smallest of the Asean countries has already acquired better strike power equipment in the form of light tanks and aircraft.

Malaysia is undergoing a transitional period in its strategic planning, from guerilla warfare to its current stress on conventional warfare. After a long period of fighting the terrorists in the jungles for which the strategy was to rely on artillery or ground weapons, personnel and communications, the defence planning now has taken on a very much larger scope.

The fundamental change in policy with the almost complete defeat of the Communist guerilla terrorists has been to take stock of the whole arena of national defence to counter external threats with conventional warfare methods.

The purchase of latest suitable ground, naval or air defence equipment were not given much emphasis during the period of guerilla warfare.

However in the last four or five years, defence planning has taken a bold step forward, albeit later than some of the other regional countries. Outmoded weapons are being replaced and up-to-date defence equipment are being acquired and complemented by well-trained military personnel.

The urgency for these conventional type weapons was necessitated by the uncertain and 'hostile' posture posed by Vietnam, which has become a pawn to the expansionist policies of the Soviet Union.

Vietnam in fact represents the most urgent external threat to the Asean countries which are its closest neighbours and since the fall of Saigon with the withdrawal of US troops and the takeover of Kampuchea by the Vietnamese backed government, Malaysia and the other Asean countries have been feeling unsafe, and fear the long-term designs of the Soviet Union to over-run the regional countries, using Vietnam as the base.

The alternative for the five nations has been to build up their armaments and defence capabilities, which the five nations are currently doing.

There has been some military as well as non-military collaboration among the five ASEAN countries — Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.

By the end of 1983, Malaysia's armed forces would be equipped with better fire power and military hardware, including possibly the A-4 Skyhawks from the US, light tanks from Britain, and a selection of naval missile-carrying strike craft.

Also being considered are the Super Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, medium battle tanks, Aviocar aircraft, frigate, helicopters and several other military equipment.

The government has concluded deals for 44 Pilatus PC-7 trainer aircraft to replace the aging Bulldogs at present in service.

For the army, medium battle tanks from Germany have been singled out and the British-made Scorpion light tanks are already on order. The Armoured vehicles and tanks would be bought in 'families' of six wheelers and four wheelers and include armoured personnel carriers, recovery vehicles and ambulances.

An agreement has been signed with BN Construction Ferroviares et Metalliques of Belgium for the purchase of 165 Sibmas armoured fire support vehicles (FSV). The deal signed in Kuala Lumpur in November last year is expected to cost at the rate of about M\$1.4 million each and delivery would be made next year.

Various models of armoured fighting vehicles were tested in the last four years including the Panhard, Mowag, Saviem, Creusot Loire and Engesa for the multi-million dollar contract.

However, when the government decision was made known on the choice of Sibmas, other manufacturers claimed unfairness and even 'foul play' in the tender exercise. They said the Sibmas was a prototype which had never been in full production.

The uproar by the manufacturers is believed to have prompted the Treasury to reopen the tenders on an equal basis for all the original bidders.

And the Deputy Defence Minister, Abang Abu Bakar said in Parliament that the question of the Sibmas being a prototype 'does not arise'.

When the tender was however re-issued, the other manufacturers' demand that the technical requirements be spelt out was found to be over-filled, but only the Sibmas fitted the specifications called for.

Agents who attended the Treasury meeting again complained that the tender specifications were made to suit the Sibmas.

But the Armed Forces Deputy Chief, Gen. Tan Sri Zain Hashim has said that careful study is made before the purchase of any equipment for the army as it is a serious matter and involves billions of dollars. Weapons bought must be found to be suitable for the country.

He said in the process of buying new weapons for the Infantry Brigade several types would be studied. Gen. Zain said the army's switch to new weapons would give it a 'new look' when all the latest and sophisticated equipment are acquired under its expansion plans.

The Cavalry Corps would be well equipped soon with modern tanks. The Artillery Corps would be equipped with new longer-range howitzers, to augment the present series of 105 mm howitzers.

It is believed that 115 mm howitzers would be acquired, which have a comparatively longer range of 39 kilometres or 24.4 miles.

Army personnel have been in training to handle the new weapons and trainers have been sent overseas to familiarise themselves with the sophisticated hardware.

Training has been tailored to adapt the three services of the forces to conventional warfare methods.

Part of the training was provided in such exercises as the 'Gonzales XIII' held at the end of November last year, where a new approach was adopted to orientate Malaysian soldiers in conventional warfare tactics. 'Gonzales XIII' was according to the Commander of the Eighth Brigade, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Ali bin Dollah, the first such exercise which centred on individual performance and was carried out battalion by battalion. The exercise assessed the combat readiness of the troops in conventional warfare and a panel of senior officers observed the performance. The intensive training required the soldiers to be thorough and familiar with the manoeuvres. The 'Gonzales XIII' exercise was different from the previous exercises of the series. These exercises and the 'Pahlawan' exercises would be held from time to time. Malaysian soldiers have been well trained in anti-guerilla

warfare which had enabled them to break the backbone of the Communist terrorists. They now go full swing into conventional warfare tactics until they become thoroughly skilled for combat.

As part of the expansion of the forces, the Defence Ministry had been allocated M\$46.5 million for 18 projects in Sarawak, East Malaysia; new barracks and office buildings besides others would be built.

At the current stage of armed forces build-up, the government has also thought it fit to provide military parts manufacture and assembly facilities as back-up services.

A defence industry is slowly taking shape in Malaysia and among the first establishments are the RMAF's Aircraft Overall Depot or Airod and the manufacturing unit for small arms. Other support equipment will be produced later.

The Airod at Subang is a high-technology maintenance centre which the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamed, who is also Defence Minister, said, has the potentials to eventually become an aircraft assembly and servicing centre.

Not only in weapons, but in logistics support as well, has it been found that the armed forces need to use modern technology. And a computerised system of keeping efficient and accurate back-up services for logistics support is being planned.

By 1986 it is intended to completely computerise the armed forces logistics support to provide effective accountable services for the Army, Air Force and Navy, in view of the expansion.

The present system, modified and adopted from the British has become outdated and not suitable for jungle warfare, according to the chief of Armed Forces Logistics Staff, Maj. Gen. Datuk Hassan Salleh.

The General said that the recent 'Gonzales' series of war exercises and the Public Accounts Committee inquiries had revealed several drawbacks and loopholes in the accountability and management of the armed forces logistics support services.

He felt it is humanly impossible to keep manual track of the whole inventory comprising 500,000 item heads worth more than a M\$100 million stored at the Batu Cantonment camp in Kuala Lumpur alone.

The Army has already taken the initiative to computerise records with the use of rented mini computers to keep track of its inventory and the Air Force and Navy are expected to follow suit this year.

But rented mini computers are only a temporary measure, while steps are being taken to acquire the armed forces own computers.

A pre-feasibility study has been completed by a group of international consultants from the US and Britain in 1980 to identify areas for data processing.

A final in-depth study on computerisation would be undertaken this year before the computers are purchased.

Computer technology will speed up despatch of equipment and inventory to the fighting units on the front line, unlike in the past when personnel had to get back to the bases for additional supplies.

Malaysian Armed Forces Strength

Population: 14,350,000

Military Service: Voluntary

Total armed forces personnel: 102,000

Estimated Gross National Product (GNP) 1979: US\$19.6 billion

Defence expenditure 1981: 5.13 billion ringgit (Malaysian dollars) (US\$2.25 billion)

US\$1 = 2.28 ringgit (1981); 2.22 ringgit (1979).

ARMY: 90,000 (110,000 planned)

1 Corps, 4 divisional headquarters

12 infantry brigades (one more to be formed), consisting of 34 infantry battalions, 3 Recce, 4 Artillery, 1 Armoured Personnel Carrier regiments, 2 Anti-Aircraft Batteries, 1 Special Service Unit, 5 Engineer, 5 Signals Regiments and administrative units.

140 Panhard M-3 armoured, 60 Ferret scout cars; AT-105, 200 V-100/-150 Commando, Panhard M-3 APC; 12 5.5 inch guns, 92 Model 56 105 mm pack howitzers; 81 mm mortars; M-20 89 mm Rocket Launchers; 5 120 mm Recoilless launchers; SS-11 Anti-tank Guided Weapon, 35 40 mm Anti-aircraft guns.

RESERVES: Territorial Army 50,000

NAVY: 6,000 (being expanded further)

2 Frigates: 1 Yarrow with Seacat Surface-to-Air (SAM) missiles, 1 Type-41.

8 Fast Attack Craft (FAC(M) with Exocet surface-to-surface missiles (SSM); 4 Spica, 4 Perdana class, 6 Jerong FAC(G).

22 large patrol craft: 4 Kedah, 4 Sabah, 14 Kris.

5 ex-British Ton coastal minesweepers

3 ex-US 511-1152 landing ships, tanks (LST).

1 support ship.

On order: 2 missile frigates, 6 Fast Attack Craft (Patrol), 4 minehunters. Bases at Woodlands, Singapore (Johore Straits), Labuan (Sabah), Lumut (Perak).

RESERVES: 1,000

AIR FORCE: 6,000 (being expanded); some 37 combat aircraft.

2 Fighter Ground Attack Squadrons with 15 F-5E, 4 F-5F, 2 F-5Ba.

2 Counter-insurgency/training squadrons with 15 CL-41G Tebuans (To be replaced by Skyhawk A-4s).

1 Maritime reconnaissance squadron with 3 PC-130H.

2 transport helicopter squadrons with 37 S-61A, 2 liaison squadrons with 20 Alouette 111.

4 transport/liaison squadrons: 1 with 6 C-130H; 1 with

2 HS-125, 2 F-28, 12 Cessna 402B; 2 with 15 DHC-4A.

2 training squadrons: 1 with 15 Bulldog 102 aircraft; 1 with 9 Bell 47,

4 UH-1H helicopters.

Air-to-Air Missiles: Sidewinder.

On order: 88 A-4 FGA (some 60 to be operational, 20 plus for spares),

2 RF-5E reconnaissance, 4 CASA NC-212 Aviocar aircraft;

Super Sidewinder air-to-air missiles.

Para Military Forces: 90,000. 19,000 Police Field Force; 21 bna (incl 2 Aboriginal, Shorland SB-301 APC, 40 patrol boats. Customs and Excise: (On order: 6 32-metre patrol craft) People's Volunteer (RELA), over 350,000.

ADMINISTRATION ADVISED NOT TO POSTPONE DEMOCRACY

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 pp 5-6

[Editorial: "Democracy Without Tears"]

[Text]

ADDRESSING the second session of the Federal Advisory Council, the CMLA-President set out with deliberate care to end the confusion caused by speculative expectations—raised among others by Khawaja Muhammad Sattar, FAC Chairman—that the aborted and twice-postponed general election was imminent. Outlining his present priorities, Gen. Zia said that the important task before him and his colleagues was not the transfer of power through elections—but the evolution of an Islamic polity. As and when a new constitutional framework had been finalized, it would be promulgated with the approval of the Advisory Council. Thereafter, he promised, the politicians and the Press would be able to play their proper role in national affairs. It is not quite clear which body or bodies shoulder the responsibility for devising an Islamic constitutional plan; nor whether and to what extent it will be based on the still extant, but abated, 1973 constitution; nor has any hint been given to indicate when it will be laid before the expectant people. The fact that it will receive the stamp of approval from the nominated Council has

little real relevance, for in the last analysis, irrespective of its merits or demerits, the plan's feasibility will depend on its acceptance by the people and their willingness to travel along the new path as yet unmarked and unknown to them.

With regard to the revival of political activity, removal of all curbs on the Press, and the holding of open elections, the CMLA-President's views on all these matters seem to have acquired greater definiteness and some rigidity. He feels, with a strongly-expressed aversion, that in Pakistan politics merely means agitation, meetings and processions, and that such activity can only lead to disruption and conflict. It is, of course, true that by itself agitational politics do not improve the country's political health, and that this requires, among other things, a sound political organisation down to the village and mohalla levels and earnest efforts to gain popular support not on the basis of empty slogans but sensibly-devised programmes. This process must begin as soon as the blanket ban on political activity is lifted. However, the administration should keep in mind that even in mature countries like Britain and

America, meetings, rallies and processions are regarded as part of normal political functioning and are rarely interfered with except when violence is threatened or feared. Even if it is conceded that the situation in Pakistan will take some time to reach the required maturity, there should really be no objection to non-agitational political activities, so that the various parties can ready themselves and the people to exercise their democratic rights in a manner that will best serve the country's interests.

As for the continuing restrictions on the Press, Government's explanation is simple: it is argued that when political activities are banned the reporting of political non-events is both meaningless and unjustified. The answer that the ban on politics has lasted too long and should now be removed, or that anyhow the debate on political issues must not only be allowed but encouraged, has apparently not convinced Authority to change its declared policy of slow gradualness. It is also said that Government welcomes positive criticism and that it does not intend to place restrictions on responsible newspapers but merely on the irresponsible section of the Press which flouts the norms of veracity and decency merely in order to improve the circulation of newspapers. However, it retains the right to decide what is positive and responsible. It has also been implied that political leaders are mostly paper tigers who seek to inflate their importance through repetitious Press statements, that if the undeserved publicity they hanker for was denied to them they would revert to a state of somnambulance, and also that they are

hungry for power and their sole aim in clamouring for democracy is a return to the seats of power

These may well be the goals of some political leaders, but we have a large number and variety and surely this description does not fit all of them. In any case, the winds of democracy will certainly separate the grain from the chaff and the people will discard elements that are seen to be worthless or selfish. In the absence of such a process of sifting, their intent and programmes cannot be vetted and the noise made by those who should be spurned by the people merely adds to the din and confusion.

With regard to elections, it has been said by all Government spokesmen that the domestic situation and the international dangers confronting Pakistan do not allow the country to undertake a free-for-all political tussle, that the election campaign would create tensions, worsen the law-and-order situation, and possibly open the door for alien forces to try and influence the results in their favour. Efforts have been made to convince Authority that the consequences it fears are all avoidable. Some political parties have gone so far as to suggest that they are prepared to go in for a meaningful election even without a campaigning period. In any case, the difficulties listed should not be an insuperable obstacle, and the rules can be such that the election will remain a civilized exercise in democratic consultation. As for the fear of foreign influence, the best safeguard against this risk is to place trust and confidence in our people who are,

despite the lack democratic experience and widespread illiteracy, gifted with sufficient political consciousness and awareness to ensure that the representatives they choose will serve and protect the national interests

Lastly, Government's recipe for what may be called democracy without tears is still so vague and nebulous that is difficult to hazard an opinion on how the system will work. Some proposals made recently, particularly by self-appointed constitutional advisers, create the fear that these gentlemen merely seek to prolong the *status quo* by giving it a thin democratic facade. Whatever the Government's design, we hope its emergence will not be delayed for too long, because the factors that dictate that we should move forward cautiously also demand that we should not continue to mark time, and above all that the direction we take must be understood by the people and obtain their sanction.

CSO: 4220/548

SERIOUS THREATS TO ZIA REGIME ANALYZED

New Delhi INDIA TODAY in English 30 Apr 82 p 81

[Article by Dilip Bobb: "A Coming Confrontation"]

[Text]

DURING a traditional little ceremony last fortnight in General Dynamic's sprawling plant in Fort Worth,

Texas, the rakish fuselage of a gleaming new F-16 fighter was painted with the Pakistan Air Force insignia in the presence of Pakistan's man in Washington, Lieutenant-General Ejab Aziz. The event, however, must have offered scant comfort to Pakistan President Zia-ul-Haq, back in Islamabad. Suddenly, the external threat to Pakistan, whether real or imaginary, had paled considerably in comparison to a more immediate, and certainly more tangible, threat building up at home.

Zia is no stranger to internal threat but there was a certain malevolence and finality in the latest one that has not been in evidence before. Above all, it was a threat that materialised from a bewildering variety of directions. In Karachi, last month, for the first time since Zia assumed power almost five years ago, leaders of eight outlawed political parties met clandestinely in an undisclosed location to hammer out a common strategy for the eventual transfer of power.

Barely a week later, they met again, openly this time, at a two-hour luncheon meeting in Karachi at the home of Maulana Ahmed Noorani, leader of the banned right-wing Jamiat-ul-Ulema Pakistan (JUP). The meeting was significant for more than just the fact that it was naked defiance of the martial law ban on political activity. For one, invitations to the luncheon meeting had also been extended to leading journalists in the city. For another, two of the parties represented, the JUP and the Pir Pigar-led Muslim League (PML) had so far refused to join the six-party alliance collectively known as the MRD (Movement for the Restoration of Democracy) led by Begum Nusrat

Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Briefing newsmen during the meeting, Noorani announced that his party was now willing to join hands with any other party, including the PPP, which believes in the restoration of democracy in Pakistan.

Crackdown: Zia's response to that particular threat was predictable. A massive, country-wide crackdown, particularly in Punjab and Sind, on known political elements of the alliance. The crackdown was essentially a pre-emptive bid against a massive anti-martial law rally planned in Karachi on Pakistan Day. The rally site in Karachi was surrounded with barbed wire and a huge complement of policemen ensured that the rally was aborted. But the message was painfully clear; the growing impatience with Zia's oft-repeated, and oft-cancelled, promises to hold early elections was turning into ugly anger. And it was an anger that was evident in almost every major city in the country.

In Peshawar, police fired tear gas and lathi-charged thousands of protestors in what was the first significant street demonstration in Pakistan after political meetings were banned almost three years ago. In Lahore, Pakistan's second-largest city, strong-arm tactics by police managed to break up the demonstration by thousands of schoolteachers demanding higher pay, but only after at least 50 demonstrators had been seriously injured. The demonstration was held in open defiance of the martial law ban on public protest. Three days later, another similar demonstration by teachers in Islamabad, the capital, was pre-empted by the arrest of the protest leaders. Simultaneously, student unrest exploded across universities, many of them violent, leading to yet another indefinite shut down of colleges. And, in Larkana, at least 10,000 people from all over the country gathered in

sullen silence at the grave of the executed prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. That the Government had no desire to interfere was evident by the fact that his daughter, Benazir, was conducted to the site by an armed escort from Alimurtaza prison near Islamabad, where she is under arrest.

The general mood of defiance was tellingly reflected last fortnight in the press features on Pakistan Day. Almost all newspapers carried gloomy, introspective pieces on the state of the nation and underlying them all was a powerful note of pessimism. Though not directly stated, the unspoken message was a clear indictment of the military regime and its failure to keep its manifold promises.

Zia reacted in the only way he knows—blustering threats against the press and the Opposition. He reimposed the partially-lifted censorship laws and in a typical tirade, threatened the press with all the gracelessness of a classroom bully. "I can close all the papers tomorrow for five years and nothing will happen. You can organise rallies and I will get you arrested," he stormed at a group of newsmen in Islamabad.

On the Opposition threat, his reaction was equally predictable and about as subtle as a sledge-hammer. Individual warnings in writing were delivered to each of the opposition leaders, including Begum Nusrat Bhutto by police-escorted messengers. The warning against holding political meetings and taking out processions followed his categorical statement in Islamabad that a general election was out of question. He made it clear that he intended to stay in the saddle till his "mission" was completed. The statement was nothing new but the situation certainly was. In the statement, Zia admitted that widespread unrest in universities, both among students and teachers, heightened political activity in defiance of martial law and acts of "subversion" had created a dangerous situation. But in the coming confrontation, the greatest danger is undoubtedly to Zia himself.

DISAGREEMENT VOICED OVER PRESIDENT'S VIEWS ON PRESS

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 34

[Text]

In his address to the annual session of the All-Pakistan Newspapers Society, President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq has complained that crime news are given so much prominence by the newspapers that the common man starts feeling himself insecure. . . .

But the fundamental reality is that the crime rate has increased and hair-raising occurrences have become more frequent. At present hardly ten per cent of the crime is reported by the newspapers. It is possible to imagine the kind of reaction if 20 per cent of the crime, instead of ten per cent, were to be reported. . . . Instead of making the newspapers a target of criticism, this state of affairs should make the authorities ponder.

The demand of society's moral reform and training are no doubt important. But leniency for and overlooking of the elements that have taken to crime as a profession and have, for various reasons, become so daring that taking the law into their own hands has become a routine with them, only increases their dauntlessness. So much so that their existence becomes a curse on society which cannot be dealt with by not publishing the crime news. It is only through quickest possible punishment of criminals that this evil can be reduced to the extent that people will not only enter their homes in peace but security of the sanctity of *chadar* and *chardi-wari* will become a pleasant part of their everyday experience and observation. —*NAWA-I-WAQT, April 1.*

SOCIETY is shaped by the interplay of people's congregation, their collective consciousness and attitude. It is the people who made society and in their meanings the two words are interchangeable. Therefore, if in the President's latter statement the word 'society' is replaced with 'people', the contradiction between the two statements of the President will become manifest, and it will be realised that the President's own mind on the subject is not clear. And we are at a loss to understand what he wishes to say. The President has also said how it is possible that while people live in the 20th century the newspapers should be in the 21st century. If this is indeed impossible, then how does the President expect that instead of the people guiding the newspapers, the newspapers should guide the people. If it is a prerequisite to newspapers' freedom that first society should make progress and the newspapers should get freedom corresponding to the progress made by society, then the newspapers will lag behind society. That is, newspapers will follow people; people will not follow newspapers. It is only through freedom that newspapers can push society forward. If newspapers get freedom after society's progress, then they cannot play any role in guiding and developing society. To our mind this confusion lies in the mind of the Secretary who wrote the President's speech and not in the President's —*JASARAT, April 1*

'URGENT ATTENTION' TO TEACHERS' PROBLEMS URGED

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 34

[From the 'Between the Lines' column: "Teachers' Problems"]

[Text]

THE CURRENT strike of school teachers in the rural areas of the Punjab and in some parts of the NWFP—entering its second month—should be seen as a symptom of the malaise that has afflicted the system for a long, long time

The situation seems to have reached the classic catch 22 stage. On the one side, Government spokesmen at various levels have expressed their readiness to consider the teachers' demands sympathetically and begin negotiations—if the strike is called off. In an effort to persuade the teachers to do so, it has been announced that teachers who absent themselves without leave will not be paid their salaries, and those who do not return to their class-rooms by April 15 will face dismissal. On the other hand, the teachers' representatives are eager and willing to negotiate, but seem determined that the boycott of classes will be continued until their basic demands are met and a clear-cut agreement has been reached. As long as this deadlock continues, the dislocation in studies will do a great deal of harm to lakhs of students.

Underpaid, overworked

Whatever may be said about the timing of the teachers agitation, the fact is undeniable that teachers at all levels of our rickety educational framework—from primary schools to the universities—are under-

paid and, quite often, over-worked; nor are they accorded the status which is their due. Palpably such disregard of their just rights contributes greatly to the steady deterioration of standards and values in the field of education.

Therefore, the teachers' side of the story must be heard with full attention. Goaded by the continuous pressure of rising prices, their pathetic pleas unheeded and their petitions ignored,

One hopes, therefore, that earnest efforts will be made to deal with the unhappy situation—not by using the usual methods to break the strike but by ending it through elimination of its root cause

The cause is well known and quite simple to grasp. A vast majority of the nearly two lakh teachers employed in Punjab's rural schools of various categories start with a miserable salary, and their increments and allowances are niggardly. For example, the lowest cadre of teachers, described as PTC, get a starting wage of Rs. 350/- p.m. With today's high cost of living,

In addition to this, they get a dearness allowance that is always lagging behind the cost-of-living index.

After this miserable start, the PTC gets an increment of Rs. 12 per year, and Rs. 14/- when he is allowed to cross the efficiency bar. The scales of pay in the upper grades are not very

much better, and even the senior-most merely get No 17 of the National Pay Scales. It is patent that these grades of pay and allowances are wholly insufficient and need to be raised immediately in order to save the teachers from chronic penury and prevent them from seeking 'extras' through tuition or other part-time employment.

Paucity of funds

The paucity of funds is said to be the main hindrance to the acceptance of demands that are admitted on all sides to be reasonable. The obvious answer is that funds must be found through an adjustment of priorities. The Government's present total allocation for education is well below the standard stipulated by international experts for helping developing countries like Pakistan to overcome their present backwardness. Forgetting alien directives, it is seen that the oft-proclaimed austerity drive has had little impact on cutting down expenditure on maintaining an ostentatious style of governance which the country cannot afford. Consider the expenditure on limousines for top bureaucrats or their foreign trips. Continued waste can only perpetuate want. And, without seeking to bring in a political argument into the question of giving our teachers a reasonable living wage, it could be said that the expenditure on the various advisory councils could be put to better use by diverting it to the Education Department. Even apart from these or similar items, there is ample scope for reducing unnecessary government expenditure and finding funds for coping with what is a vital national task. There has been much talk of spreading

literacy, so that before long most of our people can be taught to read and write. While this is certainly essential, the more immediate task is to ensure that those among our children who get the privilege of going through school are at least able to become literate by the time they are near matriculation. This can be achieved only if the teaching community is treated with greater respect.

The real problem

A spokesman of the Punjab Education Department has said that the teachers' strike—which never really took place—is fizzling out, and that only a handful of persons are out to make trouble. Those who know the situation better will disagree on both counts. The teachers' demands are fair, and apparently no mischief and trouble-making are involved in their agitation for a living wage. At the same time, reports published by newspapers that are not unduly sympathetic to the teachers' cause reveal that in the rural areas a large number of school-teachers are not working. However, this controversy is not very important. Irrespective of whether the strike has been successful, and even if the long arm of Authority can compel the teachers to abandon it, the real problem remains and should be dealt with immediately. (It is significant that the Education Department has had either to say about the merits of their demands). Nor does this stipulation apply only to primary-school teachers in the rural areas. It is equally relevant to teachers of all categories in schools, colleges and universities. Those at the highest level in Government must, therefore, give this matter their most urgent attention.

SELF HELP IN DEFENSE STRESSED

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 14

[Excerpt]

The new Foreign Minister, Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, too, made his debut in the Shooru. Besides, he held a get-together at the Foreign Office to meet the journalists as well as top officials of his and the Information Ministry and seized the opportunity to elaborate what the President said about the American offer for bases and stockpiling of American arms in Pakistan.

He explained that "certain persons" not belonging to the American Administration came to visit the President who suggested the idea and were told that the proposition was out of question.

"Certain persons"

No newsman seems to have asked who these "certain visitors" were.

The Foreign Minister also dispelled doubts about the American experts' forecast of the next world (nuclear) war breaking out from Pakistan and Afghanistan, and not from Europe. The Minister told Karachi's Bhopali in the Shooru that there was no ground for alarm that Pakistan could become the theatre for any confrontation between the super-Powers.

One wonders if it has not already got entangled into one.

Back in '71, we were expecting the American fleet to come to our help in what is now Bangladesh. Not to mention other examples from the Middle and Far East and Africa.

By the way American Ambassador to India, Harry G. Barnes, has refuted apprehensions that American arms would ultimately be used against India as they were not of much strategic value in the Pakistan-Afghanistan mountainous border regions.

He also denied that U.S. was seeking bases in Pakistan.

It will be recalled that it took the Russians 60 long years to cross the Oxus (as, it is said, in their quest for warm waters that lap the shores of Mekran).

Unless they consolidate their position in Afghanistan, there is little likelihood of their moving further down. Even if they take the "foolish" step, the entire free world would be behind Pakistan.

But there is more likelihood of India trying to take which she claims belongs to her. And hence her reluctance to sign a no-war pact with Pakistan.

If Pakistan is attacked, there is no one to change the direction of its planes and guns. The country has to defend itself, observers say.

OFFICIAL PROTECTION FOR QUAIDE AZAM'S NAME OPPOSED

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 7

[From the 'Between the Lines' column: "Protecting the Quaid"]

[Text]

SEEMINGLY in keeping with the tradition deliberately fostered since his demise—of paying him ritual homage and tribute but ignoring the principles and precepts he has left us as a rich legacy—, an FAC member has sought to give the Quaid's name and memory statutory protection.

Z.A. Suleri has submitted a resolution to the nominated Advisory Council (in itself a matter of some irony considering the subject's known views on democracy) suggesting that the name and person of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah "must be kept above all political controversy and that nothing should be allowed to be said either verbally or in print which would in any way, directly or indirectly, detract from or derogate his high status, position and achievements". It has also been recommended that the Government should take an appropriate legislative measure, which means issuing an Ordinance, in this behalf. The move typifies the approach which has in the past sought to bowdlerise his speeches and statements, so that a selected authorised version could be used to serve aims and interests to which the Quaid was always opposed.

Honest research

Most people, however, hold a contrary opinion. They believe that all that the Quaid said and wrote should not only be made available so that it can be widely read, but that it should

be thoroughly discussed and debated, so that the reality of his leadership can be kept alive and the people can better understand his concept of Pakistan's future, appreciate his vision, and plan to make an effort to translate his design into practice. The Quaid's life and work should be made the subject of honest research, so that his thinking can be disseminated and made the basis of proper understanding of the problems faced by the people of Pakistan—before and after 1947.

It can confidently be said that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, being what he was, would have objected strongly to being treated as a *pir* or *guru*. He can be regarded as an ideal, but it is certainly wrong to try to make him an idol. The Quaid was never afraid of controversy; he revelled in political debate and used it to further the cause of his people. It is also undeniable that his place in history is guaranteed by the quality of his leadership, his achievements, and his stature as a man and politician. His greatness is so outstanding that it does not require the protection of a wall of silence. If during the writing of our history, which he did so much to mould, some of his decisions are questioned or criticised, this cannot take away one jot from his accomplishments or diminish the place he has found in the hearts of the people. Therefore, instead of trying to clamp down on a discussion of issues of recent history, from which the Quaid's name cannot be excluded,

intelligent and earnest debate should be encouraged so that all the facts are made known and differing opinions are frankly expressed.

The motivation

What has probably prompted Z.A. Suleri to seek the lime-light by raising the issue in this manner are the recent remarks by an old Muslim Leaguer, stating that the Quaid-e-Azam was in favour of building Pakistan into a secular State. This is not a new revelation; many others better acquainted with the Quaid have said the same thing in even more categorical terms and have quoted from their conversations with the Quaid and from his statements to prove their point. The Raja Sahib of Mahmoodabad provides one example. Only by mistranslating this term and distorting its meaning can anything derogatory be implied in regard to such an interpretation of the Quaid's thinking. Even more relevant than the views of individuals are the Quaid's own speeches, his Press interviews, his discussions with his colleagues—some of whom are still

alive. Contrary opinions should also be freely expressed, and a judgement reached on the basis of facts, not anyone's present predilections. Of course, the Quaid's person should not be the subject of malign gossip or evil imputations, but to prevent malicious mudslinging no resolutions or laws are necessary. It would be a sad day if they were needed—and then they would serve little purpose. To consider an Indian example, the campaign of vilification launched against Jawaharlal Nehru, including vicious personal attacks, has not reduced his stature or the respect in which he is held by the Indian people. And without any attempt by the Indian Government to check the campaign, it has fizzled out.

The Pakistan Government would be well advised to ignore the Suleri resolution even if the FAC adopts it unthinkingly, so that attempts to monopolise the Quaid by a narrow section of opinion can again be defeated, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah's life and work can continue to guide the nation to its future destiny.

LOW LEVEL OF JOURNALISM DISCUSSED

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 pp 29-30

[Article: "The Noose of News"]

[Text]

President Zia-ul-Haq was polite when he told a gathering in Karachi gorging itself on an APNS (All Pakistan Newspapers Society) dinner, that journalists should seek guidelines within the framework of the national situation.

What he meant was that newspapers should not emphasise crime and disorder in the country to such an extent in their pursuit of vulgar readership as to cancel the actuality which, after all, is bearable. He said that journalists were leaders (sic!) who should not go sniffing in the wake of the misdirected procession of vulgar readers but actually lead them, not always give people what they want to read but what they ought to read.

Seldom know

very few of them are really qualified to be journalists. They seldom have opinion, they care little for investigation that may result in their coming into possession of information; they seldom know how to write and, while reporting, they pander to and confirm the ugliest prejudices rife in our society. A raped and murdered woman will get pictorial coverage for weeks and the write-up will relentlessly hint at prostitution in order to mitigate the crime of the male rapist. Once the crime is being adjudicated in the court of law, the same reporter who showed such industry in the earlier stage will fight shy

of covering the proceedings. He will perhaps be busy keeping some other court orders out of the columns of his paper in return for a bribe he has accepted from interested parties. Or he will be busy pressurising the various public organisations to give him a 'monthly' for not telling the truth about them; or, simply trying to wangle a plot which he can sell and make some money.

There is no journalism in Pakistan. How can there be journalism in a country where mass literacy is barely 20 per cent? At partition in 1947, we already had 16 per cent literacy. In more than 30 years, after much publicised educational policies, we have advanced by four per cent. In our past Five-Year Plans the provinces returned intact most of the allocations given them for primary education. Today our primary schools are in a poor state, half of them without buildings and teachers, and some of them do not even exist although someone is being paid for running them. In Lahore itself while the Mall is being repaved with scores of lakhs of rupees, the schools are mostly in a disgusting state of disrepair. The national drop-out percentage at the primary level is 60 per cent for boys and 90 per cent for girls.

Our newspapers make money from advertisements and the State is the biggest client in this sector. There is simply not enough money for the workers after the millionaire who owns the paper has taken out his expenses and

profit. Talent, therefore, does not get attracted to the profession. Most journalists are journalists because they could not be anything else. Had there been readership at the mass level, newspapers would have sprung up in small towns and censorship would have been exposed for the nonsense it is by journalists supported by a whole population of readers.

What will Suleri do?

I wonder how Mr. Suleri, our leading NPT-backed journalist, would take the advice that he should feed people not what they want to read but that which they ought to be reading.

Why is it that an excess of news becomes a noose to suffocate us? In England and America, this excess is absorbed by institutions and no one

takes it personally. On the other hand, we tend to progress towards a point where no news is good news and an absolute absence of news seems to be the ideal situation. It is our bad luck that once we reach that ideal situation, rumours begin entirely to take over the function of news. Like a tired Sisyphus we have to fall back again and again on newspapers and those pimps, the journalists. In Pakistan everyone is a bureaucrat or a bureaucrat manque. Journalists should all be made into bureaucrats; then, as in the Trust papers, there will be no news to derail the sense of security of a population that hardly reads what passes for a newspaper. In that ideal situation, Mr. Suleri and writers of his ilk can endeavour sincerely to write not what the government wants to read but that which it ought to read -
JANUS

CSO: 4220/549

ELECTIONS POSSIBLE 'IF PRESS BEHAVES'

Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 13

[Text]

MIAN TUFAIL MOHAMMAD, Amir of the (defunct) Jamaat-i-Islami, has said that the possibility of general elections exists and the present Government can hold elections at any time, "but it depends how sensibly the political parties, religious sects and the national Press behave".

Addressing a Press conference in Lahore on Monday before his departure for Egypt, and after his meeting with CMLA-President Gen. Ziaul Haq, the Amir of Jamaat said that the policy of "confrontation" with the present Government could endanger our survival as a nation. "Our army and military rulers are more civilised and sensible than armies and the rulers of other countries, and we should try to understand the present Government's point of view and must convey our viewpoint to them in a friendly manner", Maulana Tufail added.

The present Government, Mian

Tufail went on to say, was not afraid of elections, but wanted to restore democracy in the light of "true principles of Islam". He said that holding of elections could take one year or might be six years. In fact, "all depends on the attitude of the Press and politicians".

Referring to his meeting with Gen. Zia, Maulana Tufail disclosed that he (Gen. Zia) expressed the apprehension that if the policy of "agitation" and "confrontation" was allowed to continue Pakistan might cease to exist as an independent State.

Maulana Tufail expressed surprise over allegations by certain political circles that the Jamaat was arming its workers. He said that the people who made such allegations were in fact providing weapons to their young workers for "subversive activities".

CSO: 4220/548

BRIEFS

HAYAT ON QUAID'S INTENTIONS--Sardar Shaukat Hayat, a prominent leader of defunct Muslim League said here today that Quaid-i-Azam wanted to make Pakistan a secular State as could be ascertained from some of his speeches. Talking to newsmen in Chichawatni, Sardar Shaukat said as a lawyer Quaid-e-Azam pleaded the case of Pakistan effectively. He (Quaid-e-Azam) clearly wanted to make Pakistan a secular State. He said there were very few ulema and Mushaikh in the Muslim League and some of them were paid workers. For example, Maulana Hamid Badayuni was a paid worker of the Muslim League, he said, and added that a large number of Ulema, including Maulana Maudoodi and Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni, and all the religious parties were opposed to Muslim League. He said "sentimental youngmen like me joined the Muslim League thinking that Pakistan would be an Islamic social welfare State. But he regretted that the country never had democracy. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 16]

CONFRONTATION AT COLLEGE--A serious confrontation between the Students Union and the administration of Islami Degree College, Kasur, has threatened peaceful atmosphere at the campus following the expulsion of some office-bearers of the union. Last week, the administration issued show-cause notices to six students asking them to appear before the College Council on April 14. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 16]

WOMEN LAWYERS' ORGANIZATION--Lady lawyers of the country have formed a separate organisation named as All Pakistan Women Lawyers Organisation. Announcing its constitution, Miss Gulshan Ara Alam, president of the organisation, told a news conference that the main object of the organisation would be "to ameliorate the professional and socio-economic conditions of lady lawyers, to widen their scope of absorption in various fields, particularly in the Judiciary as well as legal and administrative assignments." Citing from the Holy Quran, she maintained that women were at par with men and their share of responsibilities was no less. She said that the Organisation did not want to substitute men with women, but wanted to supplement the combined human effort for betterment of socio-economic conditions. Apart from the Quran, she continued, the Constitution also provided for equality of citizens and there should be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone. She referred to Articles 25 and 34 of the Constitution which ensured practical steps for full participation of women in all spheres of national life. Thus, our demands are within the four corners of Quranic conception as well as Constitutional provisions," she added. The efforts of the Organisation, she said, were motivated with a high sense of patriotism, altruism and general social well-being, particularly of lady lawyers and, through their lead as a nucleus, the women

community in general. Replying to a question, she said that quota for lady lawyers should be reserved in the National and Provincial Assemblies and Majlis-e-Shoora. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 9]

PUNJAB UNIVERSITY UNEASY--The Punjab University reopened on Saturday after spring holidays but no academic work was possible because of the ongoing strike of teachers. The research staff of the University also did not attend to their assignments. The employees of the University also observed a token strike; thus, normal office work could not start before lunch-cum-prayer hours. The University was formally closed up to 1:30 pm. Meanwhile, the Pakistan College Teachers Association, a component organisation of the All Pakistan Teachers Federation, has regretted that the promotions of college teachers had been withheld for the last six years. In a Press release announcing its decision to join the indefinite strike from April 10, the PCTA said that, despite the Supreme Court's verdict in favour of the teachers in the nationalised cadre, no steps had yet been taken to promote them. The Association also regretted that issues like the grant of time scale, entitlement to pension from the date of appointment uniformity in allowances, increase in pay in proportion to dearness, remained unattended. The result was that there was great discontentment among the teachers community, the Association said. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 12]

RECOGNIZE SHIITE LAW--Allama Aqueel Turabi, a prominent Shia leader and Chief of Imamia Council of Pakistan, has urged the government to grant "constitutional recognition" to Fiqh Jafria (Laws of Shiite sect) as has been done in case of Fiqh Hanfia (Laws of Sunni sect). Addressing a Press conference in Rawalpindi the other day, Allama Aqeel said that Pakistan, in the past, was dismembered only because the people of its majority province had been denied their legitimate rights. He added that if now Fiqh Jafria was not given a "constitutional recognition," it might "endanger the integrity of the country." Millat-i-Jafria, he said, had played a leading role in the creation of Pakistan, but unfortunately for the last 34 years, "the community has been deprived of its genuine rights." This had led to a feeling of disappointment among the Shias, Allama Aqeel added. Throwing light on the formation of the Imamia Council, the Shia leader said that the main purpose was to convey the message of the Millat-i-Jafria to the present regime. The Council, Allama Aqeel said, did not have any connection with any political party. He, however, added that they would enter into a political alliance as and when they thought it was necessary. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 14]

UNIVERSITY TEACHERS ON STRIKE--The teachers and the research staff of the Punjab University have also gone on strike for one week from April 11. According to a Press release of the Punjab University Academic Staff Association, the Vice-Chancellor was, "on one pretext or the other, putting off a solution of the problem," for which the Association had been pressing for three months. Meanwhile, the teachers of primary and secondary schools and colleges in Sind and Baluchistan have also joined in strike on April 11, to press for acceptance of the demands of the Punjab Teachers Union. Maulana Abdul Ghaffar Ghaffari, President of the Punjab Teachers Union, in a Press statement in Lahore, demanded immediate announcement of the recommendations of the meeting held on April 1 between the Union and the Federal Education Minister. He appealed to the teachers to be fully tolerant and patient. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 15]

RAILWAY WORKERS' PLEA--A largely-attended rally of Railway workers was held under the auspices of the Railway Workers Union and Railway Inqilabi Union in protest against dearness. The workers, hailing from Railway Workshops and Power Houses, were displaying placards which read: "End dearness," "Accept our demands," "Long live workers unity." The rally was addressed by Mirza Ibrahim, Wali Mohammad, President of RWU, Jaffar Khan, President of Inqilabi Union, and Gulzar Ahmad Chaudhry, General Secretary of All-Pakistan Trade Union Federation. The speakers supported the demands of railway guards and urged the Government to pay sympathetic attention to their grievances. They expressed grave concern over the persistent rise in the prices of common commodities. For the ordinary workers, they said, life was becoming harder day by day. They urged the Government to take immediate steps to solve the problems of workers in the country. The other demands made by the meeting included immediate resumption of work at Servis Industry, allowance for Railway Shop clerks, provision of plots for railway workers and withdrawal of increase in Sui Gas rates. The rally also condoled the death of ex-Major Ishaq Mohammad and paid tributes to the late leader for his struggle to ensure a better life for the workers. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 15 Apr 82 p 15]

PUBLICATIONS FORFEITED--The Sind Government has forfeited all copies of PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S NEWSLETTER published from California, USA, saying that its January and February, 1982 issues contain material which is intended to create hatred and disaffection against the present military regime in Pakistan. Similar orders were issued against an Urdu magazine NIDA-I-ISLAM published from Tehran, and weekly INQILAB published from London. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 pp 15-16]

BAR ASSOCIATION NOTICE--The Faisalabad Bar Association has, in an emergency meeting, decided to issue show cause notices to its four members, namely, Shafique Ahmad Butt, Mohammad Sadique Randhawa, Imtiaz Ahmad Gil and Saeed Ghazi. They have been directed to resign within fifteen days from the membership of Majlis-i-Shoora, otherwise they would lose the Bar membership. The President, Rana Muhammad Zafar, presided over the meeting. Two Federal Council members, Mr Shafique Butt and Sadique Randhawa, were also present at the meeting. Mr Shafique Butt and Sadique Randhawa, were also present at the meeting. Mr Shafique Butt, in his speech, declared the meeting against the Bar rules and that it had no right to pass any such directive. He alleged that the Bar meeting decision was prejudiced. [Text] [Lahore VIEWPOINT in English 8 Apr 82 p 16]

CSO: 4220/548

AMMUNITION PLANT PLANNED

Kuala Lumpur ASIAN DEFENSE JOURNAL in English Apr 82 pp 10, 11

[Text]

Thailand's Defence Ministry is making preparations to build a 1,000 million baht TNT explosives and ammunition plant, according to informed military sources.

A feasibility study is being conducted to determine the best types of materials and management for the project, which had been shelved for more than 10 years.

The study which was started more than one-and-a-half years back is reaching completion.

But the most important issue now facing the Ministry is the huge investment capital required and the source of advanced technology. The objective in building the ammunition plant is for the Thai Armed Forces to be able to rely on a domestic source of ammunition, which would make Thailand self-reliant in times of emergencies.

Initially, the Thai government had considered purchasing a Korean plant worth about 984 million baht, but this plan was scrapped after some disagreement over the terms of the deal.

Rockets invented

Meanwhile, the Royal Thai Air Force's

Arms Research and Development Office and the King Mongkut Institute of Technology have succeeded in jointly inventing four types of rockets which were put on demonstration on the occasion of His Majesty the King's birthday last December. The demonstration took place in Lop Buri Province, presided over by Deputy Prime Minister, Gen. Serm na Nakorn.

The first type, probably the most impressive one, has been named "*Thanu Fah*" (*Sky Arrow*), a surface-to-air missile which can reach 6,100 metres (20,000 feet). The second model has been called "*Hao Fah 3*" (*Sky Cobra 3*). In the demonstration, the rockets were fired from a stationary plane and travelled five kilometres.

The third and fourth models have been named "*E An*" (*Swallow*) and "*Chao Khun Taharn*" respectively. The demonstration of the four models was considered a success. This successful invention has been judged by Thai officials involved as rendering benefit to national defence, communications, science and education.

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May 24, 1982